

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of printing an image using an image printing unit, which prints an image corresponding to image data read from an external memory card, and a personal computer, which is connectable to the image printing unit, the method comprising:
 - checking for or generating compressed image data in the image printing unit;
 - transmitting the compressed image data to the personal computer together with an image number;
 - storing the compressed image data and the image number transmitted from the image printing unit in the personal computer;
 - displaying by the personal computer the image data transmitted from the image printing unit; and
 - printing at the image printing unit the displayed image data in response to a user print request at the image printing unit.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining whether the memory card with the image data has been inserted into the image printing unit and whether the image printing unit has been connected to the personal computer,
 - wherein the compressed image data is checked for or generated upon the determining of insertion of the memory card into the image printing unit and connection of the image printing unit to the personal computer.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein if the user does not request to print the displayed image data, the displaying of the image data at the personal computer continues.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein the determining comprises:
 - determining whether data stored in the memory card is the image data, if determined that the memory card has been inserted into the image printing unit; and
 - determining whether the image printing unit has been connected to the personal computer, if determined that the data stored in the memory card is the image data.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the checking for or the generating of the compressed data comprises:

determining whether the image data read from the memory card includes compressed image data; and

compressing the image data, if determined that the image data read from the memory card does not include the compressed image data.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the displaying of the image data comprises: reading by the personal computer the image data corresponding to a user selected image number at the image printing unit and transmitted from the image printing unit to the personal computer; and

displaying the read image data.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein the reading of the image data comprises: ignoring the image number provided from the image printing unit as a last image number, if a previous image data is being displayed; and

reading the image data corresponding to the last image number after the previous image data is completely displayed.

8. The method of claim 6, wherein the displaying of the image data further comprises:

transmitting the user selected image number to the personal computer, if the personal computer is ready to receive a new image number; and

reading by the personal computer the image data corresponding to the user selected image number provided from the image printing unit.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the personal computer includes a monitor, and the image data is displayed in a predetermined size at a predetermined position on the monitor.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the image data is displayed according to a variable size at a variable position.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein the predetermined size occupies a part of a screen of the monitor.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the printing of the image data comprises:
reading at the image printing unit the displayed image data from the memory card in response to the user print request;
image processing the read image data; and
printing the image-processed image data.

13. A computer system printing an image using an image printing unit, which prints an image corresponding to image data read from an external memory card, and a personal computer with a monitor which is connectable to the image printing unit,
the image printing unit comprising:

a print preparing section determining whether the memory card with the image data has been inserted into the image printing unit and whether the image printing unit has been connected to the personal computer, and outputting a determination result as a control signal;

a data processor processing the image data read from the memory card, checking for or generating compressed image data in response to the control signal, and transmitting the compressed image data to the personal computer together with an image number;

a key operating section operated by a user to select the image number and outputting a print request signal requesting to print the image data corresponding to the user selected image number; and

a printing section printing the image-processed image data received from the data processor in response to the print request signal,

the personal computer comprising:

a storage storing the compressed image data and the image number transmitted from the data processor; and

a display controller reading, from the storage, the image data corresponding to the user selected image number at the image printing unit and displaying the read image data on the monitor.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the print preparing section comprises:

a sensor sensing whether the memory card has been inserted and outputting a sensing result;

a first data detector detecting a type of data read from the memory card in response to the sensing result; and

a connection checker checking whether the personal computer has been connected to the image printing unit in response to a detection result received from the first data detector and outputting a connection check control signal.

15. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the data processor comprises:

a second data detector detecting whether the image data read from the memory card includes the compressed image data in response to the control signal;

a data compressor compressing the image data read from the memory card in response to a detection result received from the second data detector;

an image number generator generating the image number to be uniquely allocated to the image data read from the memory card;

a data transmitter transmitting the compressed image data received from the memory card or from the data compressor to the personal computer together with the generated image number received from the image number generator, in response to the detection result received from the second data detector, and transmitting the user selected image number received from the key operating section to the personal computer; and

a format converter converting an RGB format of the image data read from the memory card into a CMYK format and outputting the image data having the CMYK format to the printing section.

16. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the display controller comprises a data reader reading, from the storage, the image data corresponding to the user selected image number, which is generated in the key operating section and transmitted from the image printing unit, and outputting the read image data to the monitor for the displaying.

17. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the display controller comprises:

a position/size determiner determining a position at which the read image data is to be displayed on the monitor and a size of the read image data to be displayed, and the monitor displays the read image data according to the determined size at the determined position.

18. The apparatus of claim 17, wherein the position/size determiner varies the display position and size of the image data and outputs the varied results to the monitor.

19. An image printing unit, comprising:

a programmed processor controlling remote image data display and manipulation and printing locally the remotely displayed image data.

20. The image printing unit of claim 19, wherein the programmed processor further detects insertion of a memory card with the image data into the image printing unit and detects connection of the image printing unit to a personal computer, transmits image data read from the memory card comprising a generated image number to the personal computer, transmits a user selected image number to the personal computer to display the image data corresponding to the user selected image number, and prints the displayed image data corresponding to the user selected image number in response to a user print request at the image printing unit.

21. The image printing unit of claim 19, wherein the programmed processor remotely controls the image data display size and position.